America's Baptismal Font Is Bombarded by Germans

STERLING HEILIG, The Sunday Star's Correspondent in France, Writes of Shells Falling Upon St. Die, Where the Word "America" Was First Pronounced — Long-Range Artillery Found the Location About the Middle of April, Their Shells Being Fired Twenty-Five Miles Away—Tales of the Bombardment and Pictures of Shell Fire—St. Die a Historic Spot for Americans.

Special Correspondence of The Star.

SAFE DISTANCE FROM ST. DIE, France, April 22, 1916.

I WILL tell you of our visit to St. Die. We are not there now.

St. Die is being wantonly and uselessly bombarded by long-range cannon, which shoot twenty miles over the Lorraine mountains, held entirely by the French.

Civilian visitors are safer just behind the trenches than at St. Die, although the trench boys look on it as a "town of the rear," where there are shops, restaurants and beds to sleep in.

Regularly, in war, you bombard a town to take it, otherwise you don't bombard it, merely to kill civilians. Well, the Germans could not take St. Die if they should bombard it for a year. There are twenty miles of pine forest mountains in between, with the armies of France and unlimited reinforcements, served by railroads and automobile caravans galore.

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Yet the Germans are bombarding St. Die, the baptismal font of America. This name was given to the town in 1891 by Frank Mason, afterward United States consul general to Paris, in a monograph which enjoyed celebrity.

Come, see what they are doing to our baptismal font!

Sunday afternoon, just as the children were returning from vespers, six great shells fell on the town and smashed two houses. Monday morning fifteen shells fell, of which three damaged the cathedral. Tuesday, between 8:30 a.m. and noon, forty-eight shells fell, six crashing into the cathedral or its cloisters. Again, at 6 p.m., five more shells fell, well aimed by German mathematics. The cathedral cloister of St. Die bids fair to be a complete wreck.

Without cause, without hope to win an inch of ground, they are destroying the most venerable spot in France for Americans.

It is worse than Rheims, Ypres, Arras or the cathedral of Laon. St. Die lies in a valley, twenty miles in the interior, unimaginable as a point for observation of anything. Yet here, at long range from over the border, the Germans are blowing up the majestic cathedral cloisters where "America" was first pronounced and printed.

Come, look! Here is the spot where, June 4, 1911, in presence of the American ambassador and a crowd of prominent Americans in their touring cars, the president of the French republic unveiled a commemorative tablet. It was to honor forever the canons of St. Die Cathedral who, April 25, 1507, printed these words in a little book called "Cosmographiae Introductio":

"There is a fourth quarter of the world which Americo Vespucci has discovered and which, for this reason, we call America."

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At the Chicago exposition there was a special hall for St. Die. In it a copy of the little book, for which the collector Rahir had recently paid $550, was exposed in a glass case, open at page thirty, where "America" first appears.

Come, see what German shells have done to the spot where it was printed, the spot which we sought to honor! Cloister wall and commemorative tablet are blown to smithereens.

Noble and tranquil cloister! Look, Americans, before it is all gone! Repose in its shadowy majesty. Its bays are lacework in stone. Here, at the time of the discovery of America, learned men strolled, talking geography and every science. The cathedral authorities ran a gymnase, an academy for full-fledged scholars. In 1507 they bought a printing press and began to set up their "Cosmography"—a bringing up to date of old geography—when their local boss, Duke Renee, brought them a manuscript in French, which some one had copied for him, entitled "Quatre Navigations d'Amerique Vespuce." It came in handy. "Here is up-to-date geography!" exclaimed the learned Hylacomylus. "A fourth quarter of the world to put in our 'Cosmography'!" rejoiced Matthias Ringmann. Canon Jean Bazin translated it into plain Latin. And so the little book was printed and America baptized in the cloister of St. Die.

When I was at St. Die no damage had been done to the cathedral. The photograph herewith shows the cloister as it will never be seen again. A year ago the Germans made a first attempt to get the range, but only smashed a suburb. Yet it was a close shave. Up to the very graveyard of the little church, adjoining the cathedral, the shells destroyed twenty-eight houses. It looked like an earthquake region. Then, August 5, 1915, the first bombardment stopped. It began again the other day, and now they've got the range of the cathedral.

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There are witnesses. St. Die has still a population of 10,000, and our American ambulances come over the mountains from the front. Twelve miles beyond, Richard Hall was killed by a German shell while transporting wounded, in full security of a highroad of the rear. Hall was a Dartmouth man, from Ann Arbor, Mich. Close by, Luke Doyle, a Yale man of Boston, was grievously wounded while driving an ambulance, thanks to the same mania for long-range revenge. Also the St. John's (British) ambulances go and come through St. Die daily.

One hears the cannonade continually. At night the eastern sky flashes with light fusees. The peasants whisper of great German transports, but the trench boys call it the "merry-go-round," periodical circular touring of masses of German infantry, to give the illusion of reinforcements. The French artillery pounds the German trenches. Night illuminations, patrols and forays alarm the Germans to their second line. Ambulance chauffeurs and wounded predict the grand offensive of the allies.

One hears terrific tales of shelling.

In the devastated district of St. Die there is a family with two pretty girls of fifteen and seventeen who are continually on the spot where their house used to be, hunting among the debris. Neighbors say that they are hunting the family hoard of gold, which had been hidden in a wall, under the hearth, or who knows where? Wall, hearth, everything is a mass of ruin, tons deep—the adjoining houses mixed and spread with their house. More likely, the girls are watching that nobody else finds the gold.

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Well, each time that new German shells fall, do you think that the girls run? Not much—unless it be to run toward the explosion, in case that their twelve-year-old brother has been temporarily relaying them. "They hope that new shells will clear the ground," says a contractor's man, who is junk-wrecking next door. "They hide behind their ruins and grub in the new craters as soon as they're made."

And it is nothing.

Peasants' tenacity in sticking to their ruins is astonishing. Close to the front, where a certain village is all but destroyed, a section of Alpine Chasseurs occupied the cemetery, in the outskirts. The cannon thundered. A German shell blew up the slab of a burial vault, while all around rained splinters of the "marmites." It was an unhoped-for shelter. A lieutenant and twelve men took refuge in it. They made the vault a kind of trench, strongly fortified. The next morning a soldier announced: "My lieutenant, a civilian, sent by the commandant."

It was an old peasant in his Sunday suit, black broadcloth, stained with earth. Mechanically he let drop the handles of a wheelbarrow that he had been pushing—a wheelbarrow loaded with a potato bag half full of something. The old peasant showed his permit and murmured: "I have come to bury my family, the Marescot family — I am the father."

The lieutenant remembered. The inhabitants had refused to quit the village, living in their cellars. So, in the bombardment, a mother and two daughters had been buried and burned. The lieutenant was about to welcome the poor man, when a squall of German shells fell. "Everybody in the holes!" he cried, and dragged the old peasant into the fortified burial vault along with the others. There he squatted in a corner, resigned, silent, worthy. "Courage, M. Marescot," said the lieutenant, "the shelling will not last long and then the burial can take place in peace. I will send men for the bodies. Where are they?"

The old peasant looked up, sad-eyed. "They are here," he said, simply. "Here? Where? How?" They are in the bag," he answered. "It is all of them that was left!" And the lieutenant perceived, with shocked admiration, that Father Marescot had not let go the bag, but brought it with him. To cut short the painful situation, he said: "All right. I will have them buried." The old peasant looked at him strangely. "You can trust me," repeated the officer. "My chasseurs will dig a grave. You may have confidence."

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"But," murmured the other, "I possess a family vault."

"Ah, good. All right. Where is it?"

"It is——"

"Indicate it. Tell us."

"It is—that is to say——"

"Where? Come, come!"

"My lieutenant," blurted out poor Father Marescot, sublime, but humble hero, "my lieutenant, we are in it!"

What is the morality of bombardment?

One hears strange stories of conscience and devotion to duty. Witness that English general in the Artois who scoured the country round to purchase the Aubigny woods from its owners, because he was obliged to bombard it. "It worries me to destroy the property of innocent third parties," said the general.

Witness the French artillery officer who offered to bombard his own chateau beyond Rheims because it was occupied by the staff of a German division, and because, as he argued, he knew the topography of the place better than anybody else. In that chateau were all his family treasures, all his dear remembrances, the riches of his heart. With his own hands, shell by shell, he shattered them. He was a hero, because he offered to his country not only his life, but his sentiments, his ideal—an ideal being, often, dearer than life itself.

Here—close to the firing line of Lorraine—one hears much of the excruciating case of conscience of French officers with respect to bombarding towns, as they advance, in German-held Lorraine.

Here, now, is an ideal deep rooted in French hearts, and they are torn between it and another—that of service to the patrie. Merely to do damage does not tempt them—they could bombard Metz ruinously, any day; and yet they don't do it. They are twenty-three miles from Metz, with German armies and trenches in between. They cannot hope to take Metz by bombardment—yet; and, so, they don't destroy its dwellings and churches at long range. They would never have bombarded St. Die. But what about real military objects? What about advancing? What about the towns of German-held Lorraine in full front of the firing line? Lorraine is French to all French hearts. The old Lorraine families have been waiting forty years for the French to come and liberate them. How blow up their towns? They can't bring their hearts to do it. Listen. They don't do it. But it makes the French advance much slower.

Of all such cases of conscience the most touching I have heard concerns a humble little church in a Lorraine valley. The Germans are there, with the French on two sides. It is the story of the master gunner of Barkirch. Barkirch is just over the mountains from St. Die.

In a certain spot, then, hidden among branches, were three batteries of French "155 long" cannons. About a month ago the man who saw the first part of the adventure was sitting with the captain when the latter called out: "Send me the master gunner of the 3d Battery.

The master gunner was a young fellow under thirty, with blinking eyes behind far-sighted spectacles. He looked worried. "My friend," said the old officer, "I had designated you to fire, this evening, on the Church of Barkirch, over there. My calculations are ready. Here are the elements of the aim. But," he hesitated," I have reflected."

"My captain," murmured the young master gunner, growing pale, "a church? The church of Barkirch?"

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"Yes, a church. But I have reflected. I exempt you. Another will fire and aim in your place. Go and report sick. No discussion. You are sick. Go to bed and drink tea. Enough. No more. You are sick till further orders."

The young master gunner walked off, without a word, head bent, like a man condemned to death. And the old captain whispered to the others: "I have stopped a drama. I may tell you some day."

A month passed.

Yesterday the captain told it.

"Do you remember the artillery boy with spectacles whom I informed that he was sick?" he said to Georges d'Esparbes, curator of Fontainebleau, who made the extracts. "He has just been killed. Now, read this (handing a pocket notebook). I must send it to his mother with his medals and citation."

(Extracts from the notebook of Master Gunner N——, campaign of Lorraine, 1916.)

"Mother, I am on the edge of a precipice. God pity me! Mother, weep for me! All that you taught me, when I was little, of kindness and pardon toward our fellow men, I have consented to unlearn, in this war, holding ready, some day, later, to convince your wisdom of the impossibility in which I found myself to have pity for the invaders.

"Mother, for thirteen months I have fired the cannon on human creatures! Who would have thought that I, with my spectacles, would become the master gunner? For all this, I can defend myself at the feet of the Lord. But now I am going to commit an abominable action, and, what fills my heart with dread, commit it squarely.

"Judge my despair! We have before us, about five miles distant, a little village with a little church that has become like a friend for me. My eyes repose on it afar off. The little house of prayer has a poor little tower, whose old bell sends us, faint and sweet, the double angelus, signal by which I kneel, morning and evening. Now, alas! bad news arrives. An entire German battalion has just occupied the church. So, the church, in which is the Presence of God, must be laid low, destroyed, by me—it is I who must ruin it!

(Here a page torn out.)

"Mother, you know how good our captain is. After giving me the terrible order — which, I must admit, is, militarily, his duty—the captain spared me. May God bless him! But how can I accept to throw the act upon another? I am the master gunner!

"The Germans let the angelus still ring. The battalion is Bavarian and many of them may be praying. I have arranged with my substitute. I shall aim the cannon—he will fire it. We shall await the evening angelus. After the first shot I shall kneel.

"In this great disorder of my soul, sustain me, mamma. My good comrades of the battery have wives and children. I have only you; so, in my great distress I call to—mamma! I am at your knees, mamma. As when I was little, lay your hands upon the forehead of your boy! Ah, not the boy of other days, but only of today—a soldier!"

(End of the extracts. The remainder of the notebook is torn and soiled with mud and blood.)

The old captain sighed.

"I must send it to his mother," he said. "He aimed the piece with his own hands—despite my orders, which you all heard—and at twilight twenty shells were fired. My master gunner was kneeling in prayer. He remained there until daybreak. We saw him. We said to ourselves: 'If the morning angelus rings, it will mean that the church still stands and we have missed an entire battalion of the enemy.' We looked at our watches. My lieutenant whispered: 'The hour is past!' Just then the master gunner staggered to his cave-room.

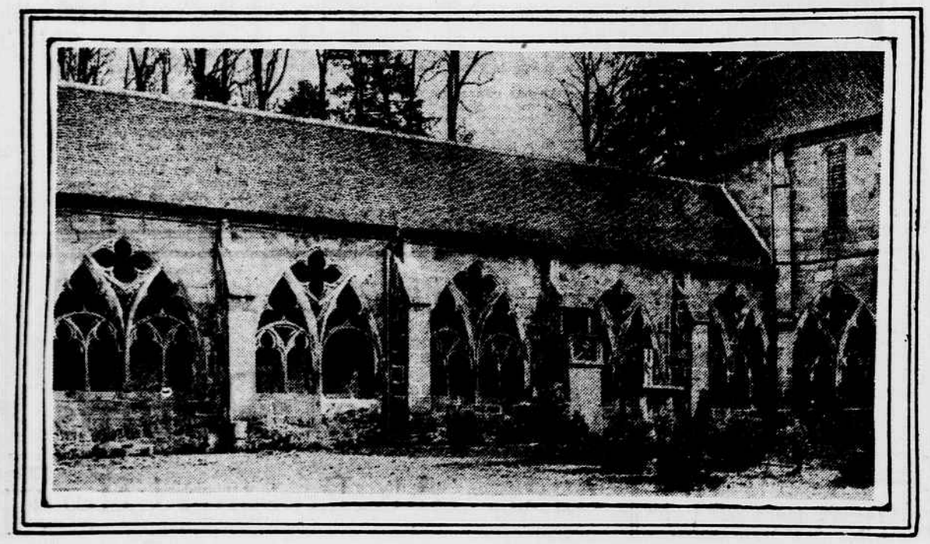
"It was a month ago," concluded the old captain. "Last Thursday he was killed by a lone 210 shell. What could the Germans have been firing at?"

It is terrible, all terrible, yes.

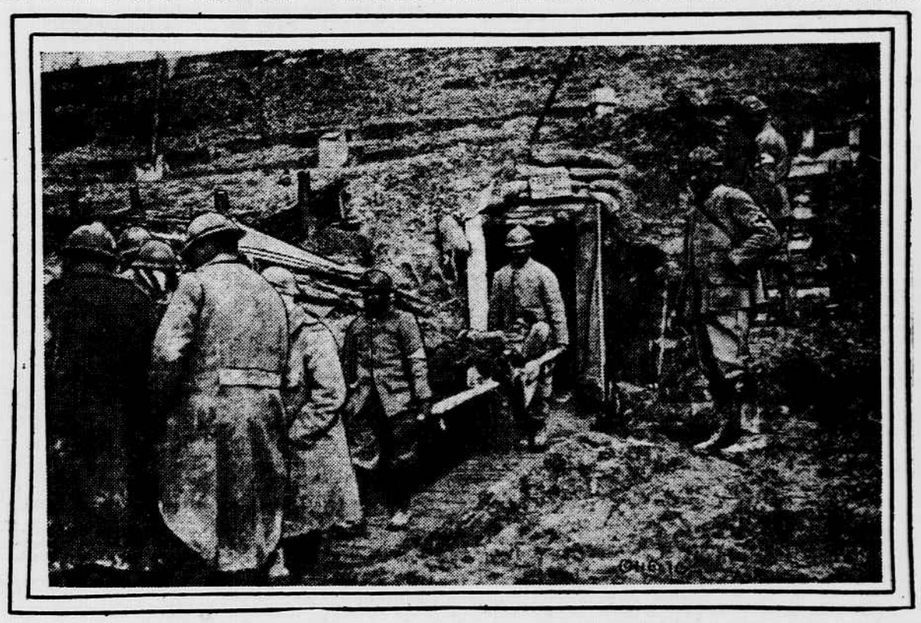
But how different from St. Die!

The bombardment of Barkirch had a military object. STERLING HEILIG.

RESULTS OF THE FIRST LONG-RANGE BOMBARDMENT OF ST. DIE, IN WHICH THE GERMANS OBTAINED THE RANGE AT TWENTY-FIVE MILES DISTANCE.



VIEW OF CLOISTERS OF ST. DIE CATHEDRAL, WHERE THE NAME "AMERICA" WAS FIRST PRONOUNCED AND PRINTED. GERMAN LONG-RANGE ARTILLERY OBTAINED THE RANGE OF THE CLOISTERS ABOUT THE MIDDLE OF APRIL.



THE ONLY SAFETY FROM GIANT SHELLS. A SHELTER FOR THE WOUNDED, DUG LIKE A MINE INTO THE HILLS OF LORRAINE, CLOSE TO THE FIRING LINE.

TODAY IS CELEBRATED AS UNIVERSAL BIBLE SUNDAY

TODAY is universal Bible Sunday. Churches all over the world—even in the stricken war zones of Europe—are commemorating by special services the 100th anniversary of the American Bible Society and expressing gratitude on behalf of this society, which has done so much to exalt the word of God and emphasize the relation of the Bible to the religious experiences of the individual, the family, society and the nations.

A unique celebration will be held in New York city, where the headquarters of this society have been since the date of its organization, in May, 1816. Washington will be the scene of a great culminating national celebration in Continental Memorial Hall, which will be addressed by President Wilson, it is understood. Several thousand churches in cities all over the country will conduct special centennial services. Bible agencies, Sunday schools, young people's societies and other Christian organizations will do the same.

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Looking back over the hundred-year span which marks the life of the American Bible Society, one sees stupendous accomplishments certified by a collection of statistical figures. For instance, it has been the instrument of circulating more than 115,000,000 Bibles during the century, at the Bible House, in New York, it prints the Bible in forty-five different languages, it circulates the Bible in more than 150 languages and types, during 99 years, as almoner for the American people it has received and spent more than $38,000,000.

Perhaps the secret of this great success is the strictness with which the society has held to its single purpose—a wider distribution of the Bible without note or comment. Denominational or racial discrimination has exerted no influence upon its aim, and it may be said that its efforts, more surely than those of any other organization in existence, have made the Bible the cheapest and most ubiquitous book in the world. In scores of languages a gospel may be procured for a cent or less; in English, a Testament may be had for 5 cents and a Bible for 17 cents. Such figures as these indicate what a priceless boon the work of the society has been to the poor, who until comparatively recent years were forced to depend on the clergy for their acquaintance with the written word of God.

The century-old society grew out of a meeting held in New York in 1816 by the representatives of thirty-five local Bible societies in ten states of America who desired to form a combination for greater action. The names of prominent American philanthropists and statesmen are closely associated with its early affairs. Its simple, dictinctive object and the intrepidity with which it fostered its plans won success for the organization from its inception. It is unhampered by religious affiliations and is sustained by contributions from different denominations. In 1852 it was forced, through the widespread scope of its work, to erect a building in New York covering three-quarters of an acre. In this plain building it issues Bibles at the rate of sixteen volumes a minute, and supervises a huge work of translation and distribution.

During the present war it might be thought that the work of the society, at least as far as European distribution is concerned, would be much curtailed. On the contrary, the war seems to have stimulated distribution. During the year 1915 400,000 Bibles were sent to soldiers in Europe. In many ways, the foreign reports say, the war has caused an increased circulation of the Bible. In England, a New Testament is part of the kit of every soldier who goes to the front. In Russia, the

OLD GARDEN STREET REFORMED CHURCH.
In this building, May 8, 1816, the convention met which organized the American Bible Society.

circulation has been unprecedented. During one month alone—July, 1915—more than 240,000 gospels and smaller portions of the Bible were distributed. The empress, when she went to the front to do what she could for the wounded soldiers, took with her 20,000 copies of the Scriptures. Recently the czarevitch has agreed to have his name appear on copies which are being distributed among the soldiers by contributions from Sunday school pupils of America. The following text is printed in each one: "His Imperial Highness, the Czarevitch, Heir Apparent and Grand Duke Alexander Nikolaivitch, most graciously presents this gospel which has been sent to him by a Sunday school scholar in America."

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In Germany and France the war stories are the same. It is said that never before have men in all stations in life taken time to read the Scriptures as they have during the last few months. Wounded and sad, the soldiers have reached out eager hands for the word of God. Sorrow and suffering have opened their hearts to new understandings.

A number of phases of the work of the society are unique. Its influence on the art of printing and the statistics which it reveals in regard to Bible printing are remarkable. Since the days of hand-lettered and hand-illuminated Bibles, made before Gutenberg applied the art of printing to the Bible, no ecclesiastical society has been more closely identified with the development of the printed book. It has proved that of all the books in the world the Bible continues to be the best seller. Furthermore, the highest price ever paid for a single book was the $50,000 given in New York for the original Gutenberg Bible.

A sum of $10,000 a year is set aside by the Bible Society for its great work of revision and translation. New translations are being made all the time, for despite the great circulation already accomplished, more than 500,000,000 people in the world have not been provided with any portion of the Scriptures. This entails the verification of hundreds of references and a study of great responsibility of different languages. The society is responsible for giving the Bible to the American Indians in five of their languages and to the Philippine Islanders in eight languages. Such work as this is indispensable to missionaries in foreign lands, who follow up their preaching and evangelistic campaigns with a distribution of Bibles to their converts.

An important part of this work of translation is the provision of Bibles for the blind. The society issues many Bibles in raised type, not only in English, but also in Spanish, Armenian, Japanese, Korean, Siamese and Armeno-Turkish.

To enumerate the many fields of operation of the Bible Society would be to give an interminable list of places on the globe. Its work is carried on in five continents and upon the islands of the seas by at least 2,000 workers. The miner, the lumberjack, sailors, soldiers, seamen, cowboys and mountaineers are some of the types in this country for whom special work is done.

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The American Indian also comes in for his share of interest in this connection. A full-blooded Chicopee Indian is one of the society's colporteurs and is known as "The Heap Big Preacher." In an interesting communication to the society's headquarters he says that with the exception of a few

CITY HALL, NEW YORK.
Where, May 11, 1816, the first board of managers met and a great ratification meeting was held.

papers, the only literature these tribes have in their own language is the Bible and a hymn book.

Besides five agencies in Latin America, the society has seven permanent agencies in Asia and the great island kingdom of Japan and the Philippines. One agency has charge of the society's printing operations and Bible distribution in the vast expanse of China. An important principle respecting Bible distribution in foreign lands was fixed by a vote to supply Scriptures to all American missions which ask the aid. By grants of money for printing and distributing versions of Scriptures, the society led in the early equipment of some of the most important American missions in the levant.

From an unostentatious beginning, with meager funds though abundant good faith, the Bible Society has grown to great importance. It has carried the Book of Books into practically every land and put it at the disposal of every man in the tongue to which he was born. It has accomplished the almost impossible feat of circulating the Bible in considerably over 500 languages and dialects, and has pushed its enterprise in the face of great odds. At the beginning of the nineteenth century in Latin America the principles of the Spanish inquisition blighted growth; France was intoxicated with the thrill of little else than conquest; southeastern Europe, Turkey, Greece and northern India lay in the clutch of Islam; China sat within its walls of self-satisfaction; Japan still held itself veiled from modern civilization; people in the South seas were devouring and killing one another and vast areas in Africa were still undefined.

With the world in this unresponsive state in regard to Christianity, the American Bible Society came into being, under what might be called a most inauspicious time for an organization with its purpose. That it has been able to spread broadcast the Holy Bible confirms the declaration of the French statesman and historian, Guizot, that "Bible societies are but instruments and servants of the divine activity which it is not within the power of man to baffle or disturb."

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New Seaplane for the Navy.

THE government is building at the Washington navy yard a large seaplane for the navy. All parts of this new plane will be built and assembled at the navy yard with the exception of the motors.

The plane is nearing completion and when finished will have taken about three months to build. It is the first of this particular type to be built entirely at the Washington navy yard. The new seaplane is a biplane with a sixty-foot span and of 6,000-pounds weight. It will be provided with two motors. It will be by far the largest air craft in the possession of the navy. It will probably be ready for a final test in another month.

All of the navy aeroplanes are of the hydroplane type. For landing after a flight and for rising into the air a fair-sized body of water is necessary, as it is quite impossible for these machines to rise or come back to earth by means of land. Consequently pilots of seaplanes have it instilled into them from days of early training that they can fly only in the vicinity of large territories which embrace lakes, bays, seas, etc.

Burning Gas Through Ice.

AN interesting scene was witnessed on a skating lake near a western city. White spots resembling air bubbles were noticed in the ice, and one of the skaters bored a hole into such a bubble and applied a match to it, whereupon a flame burst out at the surface.

Further experiments showed that when a small hole was bored down to the bubble a long, thin jet of flame could be obtained which would last for a considerable time. The bubbles were due to accumulations of marsh gas, formed by the decomposition of vegetable matter at the bottom of the lake.

A BUSY DAY WITH THE DISTRICT PROBATION OFFICER

HIS studio is in a small room across the dark wooden corridor directly back of the big, high, main reception room of the Police Court on the third floor of the Police Court building, at the corner of D and 6th streets. George A. Heaney is an artist. He draws men. He draws men away from the viciousness of vice, from the dangers and pitfalls mankind is heir to through fondness for strong drink. He draws men from the byways of bad habit back to the broad highway of clean living. He often works in his little studio after the afternoon light is poor and artists in other fields of endeavor have called it a day.

Since beginning his probation work in Police Court the middle of November Mr. Heaney has had ample time to become acquainted with most of the bad boys of the District of Columbia and vicinity, who have impressed the judges of the court with the seriousness of their intentions to never get in trouble again. Over four hundred individuals with bonvivant tendencies or possessing too nimble fingers report to the office of Probation Officer Heaney once a week. The official's calling list reads like a potpourri of an international social register and the leaf from a Washington directory.

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These callers are all members of Heaney's little family. He stands in loco parentis to more erring sons than any other worried father in the District. He is a cheerful city official despite his great family trouble. He admits, with a smile, that some of his prodigal sons believe in the continual performance system, but he is optimistic about them all. When they fall from grace he sets to work with his studio tools—sympathy, understanding, experience, common sense—and again the big bad boys leave the District building with their weekly allowance of hope and determination. They will not again break the principles of honor in vogue in the little studio fifteen feet from the judge's own chair in the big courtroom.

Mr. Heaney's busy part of the day starts shortly after Police Court opens. Persons in the hands of the law who have impressed the judge with a story of human frailty and an earnest desire to again seek the peace and quiet of the straight and narrow path find an attendant in uniform leading from the sordid atmosphere of the courtroom through a door to the left of the raised platform, where the dignitary of the proceedings rules with an iron hand.

In a moment the penitent is in the studio. He is the model before the artist. The chances are that the artist will be successful. Artist Heaney seems to be endowed with the strange knack of recovering human drift before the rushing torrent of degradation has engulfed unfortunates.

The room is dark and bare. Three chairs stand along one wall as though daring any one to try to be comfortable. It seems as though the sunlight outside is making a fruitless, half-hearted effort to flood the studio with light. Men usually see a light of another sort before they leave the building.

A little man with big ideas, wearing a gray beard like the regulation Kentucky colonel, is writing industriously at a desk in the middle of the room. It is Mr. Heaney. He looks up with interest and requests the newcomer to be seated. The attendant discreetly retires to the courtroom, looking for others who want to meet the artist. It is highly probable that the man with the bad start but honest intentions is still trembling with nervousness on account of his little talk with the judge. The chances are that he is ill at ease. Remorse is hovering in the background.

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Mr. Heaney does not begin the interview with a tirade against demon rum and charts to show the injurious effect of alcohol on the nervous system. He makes no attempt to pin a "never-again" button on the lapel of the coat of the erring son before him. For many years he was a successful attorney in New Jersey and New York. He has, from long training in many courts, mastered the art of studying a man without apearing to do so. It is highly probable that the city father will make some interesting remark about the battle of Verdun or the high cost of living in Virginia.

GEORGE A. HEANEY.

Of course he is curious. In fact, he is very curious, but politely curious—curious with the best intent. He can keep a secret, and the men coming before him in the course of a morning session of the Police Court realize this fact. Heaney has a sense of humor, kept under wraps, of course. The penitent in the chair straightens with a sigh of relief and confesses that the atmosphere of studio life is preferable to that of a court of law. He may even be so bold as to express the hope that Walter Johnson will pitch that day.

Then they get together. There is some kink in the life of the man that must be straightened out. Heaney usually works on this hypothesis. He is there to put his finger on this kink and try to see the trouble is eradicated. As a kink-curer Probation Officer Heaney is without a rival in the National Capital. Environment, disappointment, ill health, and a thousand and one other kink causes receive the attention of the hard-working official.

It is no sinecure being a probation officer for the bad boys of Washington. Mr. Heaney takes no personal credit for the success that has crowned his efforts toward unfortunate offenders against the laws and regulations of the District. He says that the success is due to the probation system that is rapidly coming into its own in Washington and which is in operation at the present time in forty-four states. Heaney believes absolutely in the great national system of probation, of which he is one of the cogs.

Mr. Heaney is studying the give-the-fellow-another-chance question very closely. He is behind the scenes. His information is received first hand and should be accurate. In four months he has had sufficient time to find out if a probation officer was a figurehead or a fixture. He gets the real story, not the fake. Men start to fool the little man with the big heart. They do not get far. He believes in fairy stories for children, but not for big, bad boys. One rapid-fire question hitting the crux of the case ends forever a desire for fame in the field of fiction on the part of the embryonic yarn teller with a tendency toward romanticism.

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"When I first undertook my work here in Washington," Mr. Heaney said, in speaking of his problem, "I had not decided whether poverty made the sot or the sot made poverty. After several months' working among the persons who get into trouble on account of drinking I have come to the conclusion that poverty makes the sot. Most of the drinking done in the large industrial centers is what I call 'misery drinking.' Bad economic conditions in general, small pay, a general disgust with life and no prospect of eventual improvement drive many men to excessive drinking and the folly that follows.

"In Washington, however, there is a different state of affairs, I think. A large percentage of the drinking in this city is what might be called 'luxury drinking.' Sociability causes the downfall of many who come to call on me. Just the other day I saw in an English paper that two Londoners were each fined £5 for treating. There is much good in that law.

"Every day here adds to my enthusiasm and enjoyment of a position that many a man would not anticipate with much keenness. I come in contact with men at the psychological moment. I am the man on the middle of the see-saw of life, who can force the man on the plank up or down. I try to shoot him skyward and keep him off the earth. Sometimes it is easy to lift a man, at other times I have to exert all my mental strength to force him to better himself.

"I have met only one man who did not want to take a chance after being sent out here by the judge. He said he did not want to stop drinking and preferred to pay the penalty of his trouble with the police instead of fooling me with a broken promise. I admired him. He was honest. I shook his hand and sent him back for the court sentence. I wish he would have given me a chance. He was a man.

"Most of the men who help me prove that the probation system is no longer an experiment are between the ages of twenty-eight and thirty-eight. However, the other day, a man eighty-two years old stood before me who had never been arrested before. If he felt that there was still a chance for him, others younger in age certainly have possibilities.

"Most of them are married and have children. I appeal to their manhood and the future of their children. Sometimes it is just the panacea their souls need. It works better than any of the so-called cures and is not degrading. The best man in the world is likely to make a false step. It takes a man to reform.

"Of course they can come back! To come back is the prerogative of man. When I was a young lawyer in New Jersey I was a member of the state prison board of that state. In the course of my work I was acquainted with more than 1,000 criminals. After they were released many of them came to me at my office with only a few dollars in their pockets and put their hands up with a 'what's the use?' expression. I was able, by reason of a wide acquaintance among leading manufacturers, to exert a little influence and secure positions for many of them. They hardly ever failed me. Early in life I became an exponent of the come-back theory. If I did not firmly believe that men were able to conquer their worst sides it would be like walking in quicksand to expend so much time and energy in a wild goose chase."

The Mystery of Quicksand.

MANY inquirers, hearing or reading of the dangerous and mysterious qualities of quicksands, have sought in vain to find the difference between these and ordinary expanses of sand. Why do they ingulf the unwary? An answer to this question is difficult to obtain and is generally unsatisfactory when found.

It is thought by some that the difference between quicksand and other sand is accidental rather than fundamental. A certain amount of unnecessary mystery seems to surround this matter. The grains of quicksands appear to be in no way extraordinary. Nevertheless, the fact remains that sand in certain localities upon coasts readily gives way under a load. Instances are recorded where a cart driven over a wet shore has rapidly disappeared below the surface. The general opinion seems to be that this is due to a soft underlying layer of clay or mud, which no doubt in some instances is the true explanation. One authority, however, points out that another factor may be the imprisoning of gas between the grains, due to decomposition of organic matter.

It must also be borne in mind that any surface in so good a contact with wet sand that the air is excluded will be held fast by atmospheric pressure, and, further, that an object so situated and tilted this way and that will rapidly become imbedded and swallowed up. It is by this simple process that the Goodwin sands have claimed so many victims. A large percentage of the vessels stranded upon them, however, float safely off on the rising tide, but now and then one is caught and doomed. In the past they have been responsible for many a shipping tragedy, and there is a pathetic interest attaching to the fact that ribs and other remains of ships long lost and forgotten sometimes reappear for a time above the surface. Since the advent of steam it is happily a rare occurrence for a vessel to be lost upon a sand bank.